

REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-17 are pending in the application.

Applicant(s) respectfully request(s) the Examiner to acknowledge the claim for foreign priority and receipt of any certified copies of priority document(s) provided earlier or received from the International Bureau.

The Office action restricts the invention to one of the following groups of claims:

- I. Claims 1-14, drawn to an item of manufacture; and
- II. Claims 15-17, drawn to a method.

In response, applicant(s) provisionally elect(s), with traverse, to prosecute claim(s) 1-14, identified as species I, along with any newly added claims drawn to the same species. Applicant(s) reserve(s) the right to prosecute the subject matter of the nonelected claim(s) in a divisional or other continuing application.

Applicants' traversal is based at least on the fact that the different "species," regardless of whether or not they should be considered separate inventions, are so closely related that the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden.

MPEP § 803 - Restriction - When Proper

... If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.

Withdrawal of the restriction requirement and examination of the application on its merits are now respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is

respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/Eric M. Bram/

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